

Memory No Servant

but a stubborn master
Eight years ago weekend in Vera Cruz
It was sugary hot no doubt
I think my bed was a hammock
cocooned in cheesecloth

Oleander? There must have been ...
past the fountains down to the sea
which I rather think was too warm
... or were they hibiscus?
Somebody else recalls that the meals
were good and cheap
I have some color slides somewhere
showing silent purple cascades
of bugambilla between the gold-cups

But what I can be sure not to forget:
Ten feet from the first bridge
on the highway beside the Gulf
a turtle coming up from the sea
Both left wheels ran over its middle
The sound a crushed carton
Looking back
the untouched head
ancient stretched and still
moving

— Earle Birney
Vancouver, Canada

the people who skim
along in rich boats
are a different caste
than those who toss
pebbles from the shore

— Dan Georgakas
Rome, Italy